

# **Poulshot Parish Council**

Minutes of Meeting Held at Poulshot Village Hall  
At 18:30 on Tuesday 1st May 2007.

## **Annual Parish Meeting**

- a) The Meeting was opened and the Public welcomed by The Clerk who explained that the format would be a little different this year as Dr Carlton Brand was speaking about the Wiltshire County Council Bid for Unitary Authority in Wiltshire. Without further ado he introduced Dr Carlton Brand.

Dr Brand introduced himself as the Director of resources for WCC. He pointed out that he was new to Wiltshire and that he was unimpressed with the standard of service provided by both the County and District councils upon his arrival. The bid for unitary status by WCC must be considered from a customer point of view and should provide a better service for £15,000,000 less per annum. WCC bid for this status in response to the lack of a bid by the District Councils. He expected that leadership would come from within the Parish; there will be 20 area boards with elected members, and a centralised back office that probably will not be in Trowbridge. He then asked for questions. What will the £15m to be used for? That's up to the elected members it could be used to cut Council Tax.

The people feel helpless, and always pick up the tab! That's why a change is necessary, and private sector philosophy will bring benefits.

What are the benefits for Poulshot? The tax burden will reduce and the £100,000 spent on the bid will be money well spent.

What powers will Poulshot Parish Council have? Enhanced powers may be possible for example to control transport, but these are yet to be agreed and discussed.

Parish Council powers are governed by law, how will the new powers be given? Upon acceptance and enactment of the white paper; which may now be in doubt with the imminent change in leadership? Powers will be considered on a case by case basis.

Will the 20 area boards become the new District Councils? No if anything they will be more like Parish Councils.

What about planning? The core functions will be in the new unitary authority.

How about liquor licences? It is ridiculous that these decisions are not taken at the Parish level and it would be something to be discussed.

There seems to be a lot of things still in the air? Consultation is ongoing and the plan needs to be developed. It might just be a case where the public have to have trust.

Will there be any redundancies? Yes 220 and they will probably not be voluntary.

The County Council has debt and the Districts have surplus cash isn't this a way of raiding the District funds? No the county has debt because it undertakes large capital projects, such as bypass work, and funds it using preferential rate loans.

Is this a done deal? No it's 50/50.

What will happen to District properties? Obviously new buildings will be required, as the customer perception must be of local visibility, there are no plans for a large centralisation in Trowbridge.

Do we have any say? No but you can write to the secretary of state.

Will you resign if it goes wrong and doesn't save money? No. I will make sure it works.

The Clerk thanked Dr Brand.

- b) The Clerk asked for nominations from the Councillors for the position of Chairman for the year 2006/7. MN proposed Mr Michael Hues, and SA seconded this proposal. The Clerk asked if MH would like to serve, and as MH agreed the Clerk asked for a vote. MH was approved unanimously. The Chairman took his seat and thanked all for their trust. He pointed out that he had had been a villager since 1963 and had served on the Parish council for a long time. He was proud of the village and doesn't want to see Poulshot change. The Green was a particularly important feature and must not be abused; the village should not turn into an urban area. He then called for any proposals for vice chairman. MG proposed MN and GC seconded. MN was happy to serve and the subsequent vote was unanimous. He then thanked the Clerk, and pointed out that although he was sometimes overzealous his only purpose was to get the best for the village.
- c) The chairman welcomed the members of the public attending. He then drew the attention of the meeting to the tragic and sudden death of Mrs Nora Dixon MBE last week. She had been an important influence on the village. The successful tree plantations in the green gardens and

Approved By Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

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elsewhere are a fitting tribute to her enthusiasm for the village. The village has lost a great friend and the Parish council would like to extend its condolences to her sister.

- d) The Chairman accepted apologies and those attending were noted as per the list under Parish Council Meeting
- e) The minutes of the last Annual Parish meeting were reviewed and any comments were called for, as none were made and the minutes had been signed in July 2006 the meeting moved on.
- f) The Chairman introduced the Council members to those parishioners attending.
- g) The chairman opened the meeting to the public for their comments.
  - a. If there is a change to the Council membership as a result of the elections, will there be a new election for the chair? The Clerk reported that this was not necessary however if the chair or vice chair were affected another ballot would ensue.
  - b. The owners of N0 72 the Green asked if the Parish Council or the Clerk had any particular complaint about their property? MH stated that as far as he was aware there was no further problems as an application had been made for the front access and had been given. The owners wanted to know if the Clerk had any issues? The Clerk stated that he did not have issues other than those the Council directed him to deal with. MN felt that the letter written by the owners was somewhat offensive, but that the matter should be dropped.
  - c. Mr I Sault wished to clarify the position regarding Manor Farm Developments and the proposed commercial development. He pointed out that there were existing approvals from 1982 and the current plans were no different from those. Once a plan had been implemented the permission exists indefinitely. He feels that he does not have to consult with the council before applying for planning permission, and in this case he fully consulted with the immediate neighbours. He felt that the council's objection was incorrect in this observation. The chairman directed the Clerk to amend the objection accordingly. Mr Sault stated that vacant units will always exist, and he was not sure how many vacant units exist in the area. He felt that the neighbours to the project had been very active and hoped that they had not overly influenced the Parish council. He said that so far they had improved one unit and tidied the site, they had not begun work. He would be happy to meet with anyone on site to discuss the proposals. MH stated that the council works for all the people of Poulshot and the overall view was that a business village is not needed. Parking and traffic were also an issue and the council had considered the matter carefully before making comment, he saw no reason to change those comments. Mr Sault pointed out that popular opinion believed employment brings vitality to villages and that there is a need. Should the proposal be refused (decision in June) he may consider other uses for the site. GC stated that approval might set a precedent. Mr Sault said that there is no legal reason why such a decision would set a precedent.
- h) As there were no other comments the Chairman closed the meeting.

## **Parish Council Meeting**

### **1. Attendance**

#### **Attending -**

Mr Michael Hues (MH) Chairman  
Mrs Sue Aldridge (SA) Councillor  
Mr Joe Dyke (JD) Councillor  
Mr Malcolm Nixon (MN) Vice Chairman  
Mr Geoffrey Collett (GC) Councillor  
Mr Nicky Hunloke (NH) Councillor  
Mr Joe Baber (JB) Councillor  
*Mr Michael Wilson (MW) Parish Clerk#*

**Apologies -** Judy Edwards (Neighbourhood watch Coordinator)

**Absent -** Mrs P Rugg (Wiltshire County Council)  
Wiltshire Police

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**Visitors -** There were 25 members of the public in attendance.

## **2. Public meeting**

The Clerk pointed out that despite several attempts to contact the Police he had been unable to make contact with the new Inspector for our area. He would renew his efforts as our beat officers were due to be assigned in April. MH stated that Judy Edwards had been unable to continue as Neighbourhood watch coordinator, he had therefore taken over. He stated that it was up to all Parishioners to act as good neighbours and to keep an eye on things. He had recently attended a coordination meeting where 4 parishes were represented, however 20 officials attended from the Police etc. he reported that CCTV was being installed in Devizes and that 115 new special constables were being trained for Wiltshire. He wondered if some of the youth problems in the village were a spill over from Devizes. He asked that any one with anything to report should contact him.

The chairman thanked those participating and closed the public meeting.

## **3. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Minutes of last meeting 6/03/07, were reviewed and no comments were received. The minutes were then approved by the council and signed by MH in the presence of the council.

## **4. Matters arising**

### **4.1. Playground safety**

SA reported all is well. The Clerk reported he had now received an invoice for the cleaning cost.

### **4.2. Quality Parish Councils**

The Clerk reported no progress and that he was seeking clarification based upon the unitary bid.

### **4.3. Lengths Man report**

GC had provided a list of work to the Parish steward; he also intended to attend the annual highways meeting on May the 8<sup>th</sup>. The Steward was attending every 6 weeks. MG reported that the cleaning of the path at Belle Vue had been a success, however the surface was broken. GC replied that there was no plan by highways to fix the problem. He also reported that during May weed reduction would be taking place.

### **4.4. Village Green**

MH reported that the first cut had taken place and the program would be as last year, he was not aiming to achieve a bowling lawn appearance.

### **4.5. Sewers on the Green**

MH reported that Wessex had returned and rolled, cleared and reseeded the site; a bit of rain should return the area to first class condition. MN pointed out the success of the sewer work.

### **4.6. Tracks on the Green**

MH stated that the general view was that the splays should not be tarmac covered, and that if splays were restricted there could be problems. GC pointed out that two splays were in fact covered by tarmac, and these were the tidiest. MN supported this stating that it helped wear when large vehicles were turning. He also stated that it prevented gravel running onto the main road with safety consequences. NH stated that he did not want to see banks. It was stated that Hay lane splay is curbed and banked and it is the best preserved splay. Doubts had also been expressed based upon a clear demarcation between the public and "private" roads. GC pointed out that curbing and tarmac help to contain the splays and corners. MN asked who would pay for the work, MH stated that the Council would pay and that some grants are available. MN suggested that perhaps one splay should be tried. MH suggested that the decision be put off to July in order for the council to fully consult. This was agreed.

### **4.7. Stones on the Green**

The Clerk reminded all of their commitment to remove stones during the summer.

### **4.8. Village Design Guide**

NH reported that Mr Pope-Baron was undertaking the preliminary work on the guide.

### **4.9. 74 The green**

The Clerk reported no progress.

### **4.10. Townsend New footpath**

The Clerk reported that agreement had now been reached, Rod Gibbs of highways was aware of the work required and it would be programmed shortly.

### **4.11. Pond**

GC reported that the repairs had been successful.

### **4.12. Guest speakers**

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MH asked all for any suggestions for speakers in the future.

## **4.13. Water in Green Gardens**

GC reported that his investigations had proved a leak existed, and would undertake the work.

## **4.14. Elections**

The Clerk reminded everyone to vote.

## **4.15. Footpath Signs**

The Clerk reported that he had asked for quotations for permanent signs.

## **4.16. Ditches**

MH reported that ditches generally belonged to the farms along side the road. He explained that WCC had repaired the ditches near Sillington lane and at Lodge farm.

## **4.17. Football**

The Clerk had received no further communication from Jan Winter.

## **4.18. Reorganisation of local government**

The Clerk referred the meeting to the talk by Dr Brand.

## **4.19. Footpath by Lodge Farm**

MH reported that a meeting had taken place with WCC and they had agreed that the footpath was dangerous, but that they had no budget to take action in the short term. They had suggested that a donation of £1000 would allow the work to proceed more swiftly, within 2 months. MN felt that it was a form of blackmail or private health care, but that the work is vital. The road is dangerous at that point and he would not like an accident on his conscience. GC broadly agreed and felt that a road widening might also be beneficial. SA begrudged the money but felt that it was important. MN stated that this is the purpose of the precept and it will benefit the village. MN proposed that the money be spent, JB seconded and all voted in favour. MH suggested an on site meeting, and asked the Clerk to arrange it.

## **5. Plans**

A proposal for tree removal at Townsend Cottage was considered and approved at the meeting. There had been various plans presented in the interim, the status of which was reported in the agenda to the meeting.

- Higher Green apartments - Approved
- 60 the green – refused
- Trees at Townsend – approved
- Trees at Lower Green – approved
- Manor Farm developments 1 office – approved
- Belle Vue Farm – Pending
- Moat house trees – Approved
- Rose Cottage Tree works - Approved
- Home Close new House – Pending
- Home Close extension – Approved
- Manor Farm Developments 6 offices - Pending

No further discussion of plans took place at the meeting.

## **6. Accounts**

- 6.1. The Clerk presented the current financial position, with the current balance standing at about £3400.
- 6.2. The Clerk is in the process of finishing the end of year figures for 06/07 and presented that data to the council. It shows clearly that the council has sufficient funds to cover the expected costs of the speed limit.

### **6.3. Payable.**

1. Several accounts were payable; but no cheques were signed at the meeting;
2. In the interim between meetings several cheques had been signed by Councillors.
  - a. Hawes MaCleod Tree cutting £250.00
  - b. Walc Insurance £352.58
  - c. Walc Membership £34.00
  - d. Playground cleaning £240.00

## **7. Any Other Business.**

### **7.1. 17 Poulshot Rd**

The Clerk stated damage had occurred to the verge outside number 17. He had taken the matter up with Sarsen and Highways.

### **7.2. Corn Close**

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The Clerk read out a letter received from Corn Close that asked for the councils help in tidying up a hedge. MN pointed out that the hedge was not on parish land and was under private ownership. He also reported that hedges were subject to many rules and regulations and that this might have prevented the trimming. The Clerk was instructed to write and explain this to the person concerned.

### **7.3. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

### **8. Next Meeting**

Tuesday 3/7/07 at 19:30 Poulshot village hall.

The Chairman closed the meeting and thanked those attending.

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