

Minutes of the meeting of London Colney Parish Council held in the Sports Pavilion, Morris Playing Field, London Colney, held on Friday, 1 February 2008 commencing at 7.30 p.m.

Present: Mr M MacMillan (Chairman)
 Ms EM Gordon
 Mr H Jones
 Mr K Bowes
 Mr R Cooper
 Mrs M Crouch
 Mr N Mahoney

In attendance: Mrs G Patschinsky (Parish Clerk)

19 Members Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

20 Apologies

Apologies have been received from:

Mr D Katuwawala
 Mr C Flynn

Councillor MacMillan expressed his thanks for all the good wishes he had received during his recent illness.

21 Minutes

An amendment to Item 15 of the Minutes of 11 January 2008 was requested. Councillor Mahoney advised that he had attended the Parish Liaison meeting where various parking and traffic issues had been discussed and that Councillor Crouch had attended the meeting where the resolution to close the Parish Liaison Committee had been presented.

Subject to the above amendment it was **resolved that** the Minutes of the last meeting of the Council held on 11 January 2008, having been circulated previously to all members, be **approved** and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

22 Matters Arising from the Minutes

236 Question Time

The Clerk reported back to the meeting that John O'Connor had responded to a letter of complaint from the Council regarding the mess being left behind after grass-cutting of the verges due to litter-picking not being adequately carried out prior to the cutting. A new manager was in post who could not comment on past practices, but did commit

to ensure that the matter was addressed when cutting resumed in the spring.

249 Sheltered Housing Review Briefing

Linda Middleton from SADC Housing Department gave a briefing on the above Review.

In 2005 SADC adopted a new strategy, developed by a consultant specializing in provision for older people, to improve both council and private housing options for older people. It looked in detail at the Sheltered Housing. Currently there are 14 sites, comprising approximately 350 flats of which $\frac{2}{3}$ are bedsit/studio flats. Although many were remodelled in the 1990s, there are still a number which are not self-contained and this seems to cause the largest problems. Despite offering financial incentives and allowing owner/occupiership, some 55 places still remain unoccupied.

A working party has been looking into how the options can be improved and it has become clear that some schemes will need to be knocked down and redeveloped, whilst others can be remodelled.

SADC decided that they needed to consult with residents about what options may be available as they do not currently have the funds to make all the improvements. The two options that were presented were:

- 1) Transfer all Sheltered Housing to a Housing Association who would then be able to do the required remodelling/improvements.
- 2) Transfer the empty flats to a Housing Association who would not do the remodelling until all the flats in a particular scheme had been handed over. In the meantime the flats could be made available to slightly younger people (40s - 50s). This model has been used successfully in decorum.

Survey results gave no clear steer with approximately $\frac{1}{3}$ of respondents in favour of Option 1, $\frac{1}{3}$ in favour of Option 2 and the final $\frac{1}{3}$ having no preference.

Council agreed that the improvements to the Sheltered Housing did need to continue. To this end a second consultation was arranged using external consultants Opinion Research Service. A pilot consultation took place at Eric Steel House where discussion groups were held with the residents, no staff or councillors were present to ensure that residents could air their views fully. When asked what they wanted from Sheltered Housing the response was that the current facilities were too small with difficult access to kitchens and bathrooms. Cabinet has agreed to an individual approach to each existing scheme but this will take longer (no timescales currently available).

Cyril Dumbleton House will remain as a Sheltered Housing Scheme in London Colney and they are looking at enlarging it. Remodelling existing schemes tends to reduce the number of flats available but SADC want to ensure that they provide a scheme that meets the needs in London Colney - this will be explored in the consultation.

Councillor Gordon reported residents concerns about the possibility of becoming a Housing Association tenant as there was more contact and felt more secure with the Council.

Councillor Mahoney asked if SADC had spoken to Housing Associations such as Hightown Praetorian who currently have Sheltered Housing. Linda Middleton responded that they have not, but have looked at some others in the area.

Councillor Crouch queried the number of unoccupied flats. Linda Middleton confirmed that there are 55 spread throughout the district but none in Dumpleton House.

Councillor Jones queried how people went about getting on the list for Sheltered Housing and was advised that people first need to be on the housing list and then need to complete a form.

Councillor MacMillan noted that on the whole people do not want to move out of their existing comfortable homes into bedsit accommodation so to improve the existing accommodation to make it more acceptable was an excellent idea. However consideration must be given to the fear that residents feel over the idea of being decanted from their existing schemes during improvements. The District Council does not currently have the funds available but perhaps some income from the sales of land could be used - this would, however be a matter for a political decision.

Linda Middleton was thanked for addressing the meeting.

23 Police report

A written report had not been received from the Police.

24 Question Time

- (a) In response to a question about the light in the Millennium Clock, the Clerk advised that parts were on order and the repair would be completed as soon as the parts were received.
- (b) District Councillor Katherine Gardner asked if the Parish Council was aware that the Jubilee Centre in St Albans is under threat of closure. A petition was available and was circulated at the meeting and will be made available for members of the public in the Parish Office. It was also **agreed** that the Parish council should write to SADC to express its concerns as the centre serves the residents of London Colney.
- (c) A question was raised about the Housing Association responsible for Alsop Close. They do not listen to residents complaints about an untidy and unclean area. Recently the area has been tidied up by the residents themselves. It was **agreed** that the Council would check on the condition of the area and would write to the Housing Association concerned.
- (d) District Councillor Katherine Gardner reported that at a recent visit to Sainsburys a Mori poll was being taken regarding the site including the issue of lorries parking on the access road overnight.
- (e) A member of the public queried whether Section 106 monies could be used for an access to the Cotlandswick playing fields from Shenley Lane rather than the dual carriageway. It was **agreed** that the parish

- Clerk and the Groundsman would consider the problem and report back to the Council with a view to writing to Hertfordshire Highways.
- (f) Councillor Gordon noted that there was a sum of £500K available from the Highfield development for the building of an Astro-turf pitch which had not been completed and questioned whether this money could possibly be channelled into the development of this site in London Colney. Councillor Jones pointed out that the idea of putting a road through on land used by the Irish Club had been raised in the past. It was **agreed** that this matter would be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

25 Correspondence

- (a) Correspondence was received and noted from London Colney Village Concern, Colney Fields Retail Park - alterations to car park
- (b) Correspondence was received and noted from Mrs Gibson re Bus Shelters by War Memorial & opposite Golden Lion. The Project Manager is currently working on the issue of new bus shelters and as in contact with Hertfordshire Highways as the traffic calming work that is due to be carried out on completion of the public consultation taking place during February may have a bearing on the matter. A response would be sent to Mrs Gibson.
- (c) An invitation to the Hertfordshire Constabulary, HAPTC Seminar - Policing in Hertfordshire at Police HQ was received. Councillor Cooper will attend on 29 April 2007, Councillors Jones and Mahoney expressed interest and will advise the Clerk regarding dates.
- (d) Extracts from papers to be presented to SADC Council meeting 23/1/08 re Council Tax Base 2008/2009 were received and noted.
- (e) Correspondence was received and noted from London Colney Local History Society, Letter to SADC re Planning Application for demolition of Kings Head and redevelopment of site. District Councillor Gardner requested a copy of the letter.

26 Groundsmen's Report

- (a) The Clerk gave a verbal report to the meeting on the Groundsmen's activities over the last month:
- Ongoing maintenance has been undertaken on the football pitches, including spiking, raking, repair and marking out.
 - New seats are being made for the paddling pool.
 - Low Bell Lane undergrowth has been cleared round the footpath areas and cleaning up completed.
 - Tree planting has taken place by the river and White Horse Lane. Some fallen and rotten trees have been removed by the river and on the allotments.
 - Repair and clearance of the drains has been completed on the allotments, White Horse Lane and the church car park. The latter has had the drain covers replaced.

- The main height restriction gate into the car park at White Horse Lane has been repaired following recent damage to the support post.
- (b) Forthcoming work for Feb/Mar (weather permitting) in addition to the ongoing maintenance throughout the parish:
- Low Bell Lane - further removal of dead undergrowth, tree branches, etc and replanting.
 - Low Bell Lane Lakes - the island came adrift in the recent bad weather and will need to be repositioned and anchored down again.
 - Village Green and White Horse Lane - tree stumps will be removed from these areas using a stump-grinder.
- (c) A query was raised over responsibility for the trees/undergrowth opposite Ridgeview. This is not Parish council land but the Groundsmen have assisted where it may be dangerous. This would normally be handled by Mr Branch at SADC. A lot of litter was present and it was **agreed** that the Clerk should enquire who is responsible for this area and to make them aware that it needs attention.

27 Finance

- (a) **Resolved that** the list of accounts attached at Appendix 1 be approved for payment and that the Council should write to Mr T Turner to thank him for his donation to cover the cost of the Christmas tree.
- (b) The draft financial report for the year to date to end December 2007 was received and noted with income and expenditure both on track for the year. Ms Celia Shears advised the meeting that the grant to Meals on Wheels would not be needed this year. It was also noted that the Christmas Ball and Carol singing had raised £947.57 and it was **agreed** that a grant of £500 would be made to London Colney Youth Project with the remaining monies being split equally between the four schools in the village. A Press Release will be issued to local newspapers.
- (c) Members received the updated budget for consideration and it was **agreed** that a meeting would be held on Thursday 14 February 2008 to set the final budget for the year 2008/2009.

28 Town Planning Matters

- (a) Town Planning applications concerning London Colney received by the District Council were examined in conjunction with the relevant plans and it was

Resolved that the following comments should be conveyed to SADC:

5/2008/0019	Demolition of public house and erection of thirteen residential units comprising of a block of eight flats and five houses. (eight, two bedroom flats, four, three bedroom dwellings and one, four bedroom dwelling) including twenty two parking spaces and associated landscaping at The Kings Head PH 222 High Street London Colney AL2 1JQ	OBJECTION - on grounds of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change use resulting in loss of community facility. • Over-development. • Safety issues relating to access problems - especially as adjacent to junior school. • Inadequate parking. • Detrimental effect on the streetscape
5/2007/2774	Two storey side and rear extension and conversion of two dwellings into four dwellings at 61-63 Shenley Lane London Colney AL2	NO COMMENT
5/2008/0043	Replacement windows and doors at 191-197 High Street London Colney AL2 1HD	NO COMMENT
5/2008/0084	Removal of Condition 2 (the use hereby permitted shall be limited to a period expiring one year after its commencement) of planning permission 5/05/1528 at 149 High Street London Colney AL2 1RP	NO COMMENT
5/2008/0098	Loft Conversion with front and rear rooflights and extension to chimney breast at 1 Spinnet Row, Goldinring Way, Napsbury Park, London Colney	NO COMMENT

- (b) It was **agreed** to ask District Councillors to call in application 5/2008/0019 and that Kevin Williams at Hertfordshire Highways be contacted to comment, in light of the Council's objections on the grounds of access and road safety. Concern was expressed about the removal of the condition relating to application no 5/2008/0084 as there may be a large increase in the number of people using the mosque. However, no complaints had been received and residents of Seaton Road or their neighbours. It was **agreed** that no objection would be made to this application. The Council also noted that they had received a holding letter from SADC in response to their comments relating to the development of the Haseldine Road Car Park as a mosque site.

29 Projects Update

A written report from the Project Manager was considered:

- (1) Walsingham Way - Groundwork Hertfordshire had been advised of the budget for this project and requested to provide an indication of what could be done for the specified amount and what the cost of their overall design presented at the last meeting would be. This had not been received and it was **agreed** that a complaint should be made to them as this was now delaying the project.
- (2) Bridge railings - This had appeared on the Planning sheets that District Council issue for the Planning Lists. It was noted that a leaflet regarding this matter had been circulated in the area close to the bridge. The Groundsman advised the meeting that he did hold sufficient material to complete the railings to match those parts already replaced.
- (13) Shenley Lane - It was **agreed** that authority to proceed should be sent to Groundwork Hertfordshire in order that they can produce an action plan and time schedule.
- (17) Bus Shelters - The Project Manager was requested to contact Hertfordshire Highways and then to respond to the correspondence received from Mrs Gibson.
- (18) Shenley Lane Cabin - Rumball Sedgewick are still to provide a report following their recent site meeting and it was agreed that quotes should be requested from local builders to be received by 13 February ready for consideration at the budget meeting. The Project Manager was also asked to look into the possibility of obtaining a grant to support this project.

30 Parish Liaison Committee

Councillor Gordon reported that at a recent full meeting SADC confirmed that the Parish Liaison Committee had been abolished as they felt that it was not worth the money. This was a valuable forum enabling parish representatives to discuss mutual concerns. A Town Centre Forum will serve only very limited areas but will be paid for by the whole district.

The Parish Council felt that SADC are silencing the voice of the Parishes and that it was a penny-pinching measure when there are only three meetings per year. It was **agreed** that the Parish Council would issue a Press Release on this issue to local newspapers.

31 Litter/Overnight Parking by Lorries adjacent to Village Green/Low Bell Lane Lakes

It was **agreed** that this matter be taken forward to the next meeting and that Councillor Crouch should liaise with Councillor Flynn to set up a meeting.

It was also noted that there seemed to have been an increase in the number of lorries driving through the village and it was reported that the police have written both to the site owners/managers and the satellite navigation companies regarding this matter.

32 River Colne Ford

It was **agreed** that there is no action that can be taken by the Council as the ford is a Public Right of Way.

33 Recreation Facilities at Napsbury Park

- (a) The Clerk gave a report on a recent meeting with Ian Holland, SADC, regarding the recreational facilities on Napsbury Park. SADC are currently awaiting a report from an independent external consultant on an assessment of the facilities, in particular a few areas of concern regarding the proper construction of the facilities. Following the receipt of the report the developers will need to carry out remedial works prior to handover.
- (b) The pavilion and multi-use games area, not currently floodlit, are ready for immediate use, but the pitches are not yet available. It is estimated that the senior football pitch will be ready for use in two to three months, and the junior pitches in the summer. The cricket table may be available for colts' games in the summer but the timescale for senior games is unclear.
- (c) The Parish Council has expressed an interest in managing the site and SADC support this. Under Section 106 the area would be transferred to the District Council at which point they would lease it to the Parish Council. The terms of the lease would include passing Section 106 obligations to the Parish Council, including a sum of £200K to cover the cost of repair and maintenance. The Parish Council agreed to a lease for 50 years. The site could be run by a Trust, similar to Highfield Trust, but controlled and set up by the Parish Council.
The facility would meet the needs of the whole community and as such various requirements would be included in the lease, for instance allowing use for football events and by Play Rangers. Other community projects organised by SADC would have to be negotiated separately. A draft lease would be prepared by SADC's legal department and forwarded on to the Parish Council.
On receipt of the independent assessor's report a final snagging meeting will be held on site including representatives from the Parish Council.
It was **agreed** that the venture will be called the London Colney Park Trust.

34 Date of the Next Meeting

It was **agreed** that the next meeting will be held on Friday 7 March 2008.

35 Reports of Meetings Attended

- (a) Councillors Mahoney and Jones had attended the SADC Recycling seminar which detailed SADC's recycling schemes. In addition to the new recycling initiatives, there are other changes - all bags will have to be placed at the edge of the property boundary, rather than within the garden, or they will not be collected; once wheelie bins come into full use bin bags will not be collected - all waste will have to be in the bins and green waste will have to be in the relevant bin and not in bags.
- (b) Councillor Bowes reported on the Parish Environmental Action Plan (PEAP) meeting held 30 January 2008. The meeting was attended by Jazz Perkins from the Countryside Management Service (CMS) who gave a presentation on the production of Peeps. In the first instance London Colney will need to prepare a portrait of the parish, outlining all the areas within the Parish that can be covered by the Action Plan. CMS will then collate the information and assist in producing the first draft of the Action Plan. CMS also have funds available to assist with specific projects and for footpath development. A brief on the PEAP will appear in the next London Colney News calling for residents to put their names forward for the Working Party.
- (c) Councillor Cooper had attended the St Albans District Association of Parish Councils meeting held at Childwickbury Green where they had discussed the demise of the Parish Liaison Committee
- (d) Councillors MacMillan and Gordon had attended a Highways Meeting where proposals for the expenditure of £550K of Section 106 monies had been discussed. This money was only available for traffic calming and not for road repairs. The traffic calming proposals for Kings Road, St Annes Road, White Horse Lane, High Street, Shenley Lane and Barnet Road are the subject of a consultation which will be taking place in the Parish Centre on 16, 20 and 21 February 2008.
- (e) The issue of inconsiderate parking had been raised with the Council by a resident and it was **agreed** that the Council should write to Hertfordshire Highways to ask for their support in obtaining relief from inconsiderate parking in the High Street and write to the resident.
- (f) Councillors Gordon and Crouch had attended the meeting of the Parish Council Events Working Party and reported the outcomes to the meeting:
 - (i) The Christmas Lights Switch-on was seen to be a success and the change in venue was appreciated. There needed to be a canopy over the performers and the sound system needs improving. Mark Bilsby, the compere, had offered to advise on the costs of purchasing a suitable sound system and costs to be presented at the March Council meeting.
 - (ii) Village Panto - The Parish Council had been charged for hall hire - this is to be queried. Questions had been raised about advertising and promotion but this had been fully covered with advertisements in the Parish News, posters around the village and leafleting of parents at school gates. The cost to the Parish Council will be confirmed at the March meeting.

- (iii) Christmas Ball - The future of this event is to be discussed further, along with a possible Summer Ball.
- (iv) Larks in the Park - Has been confirmed as 29 June 2008. Requests have been made for more visual/spectacular events this year. It was noted that CMS will be attending to promote PEAP.
- (v) Wheels Event/Pram Race - This will require a Risk Assessment and of any implications that supporting such an event may have on the Parish Council.
- (vi) May Day - The proposal is that an event is run on the Village Green. The Project Manager is to look into implications regarding insurance, performance licence, etc. Ideas put forward include Maypole Dancing and Scottish Dancing.
- (vii) It was **agreed** that views and funding implications should be fed back to the March meeting.

36 Any Other Business

Land at Watersplash Court - Councillor Bowes reported that he had received a copy of a letter from District Councillor Gardener relating to the green area at Watersplash Court. It appears that the property owners are blaming the residents for the condition of the area and Councillor Gardener has responded. Councillor Bowes agreed to prepare a draft of a letter for the Parish Council to send in respect of this matter.

37 Exclusion of Public from the Meeting

In accordance with the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act, 1960, it was **resolved** that the public now be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

London Colney Parish Council				
ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT TO BE PRESENTED AT THE MEETING HELD ON THE 1 FEBRUARY 2007				Cheque No/ Payment Type
Alban Locksmiths	Office Machine Maintenance		£ 8.80	CASH
	Office Machine Maintenance		£ 5.50	CASH
Blue Light Office Supplies	Stationery		£ 30.52	300605
Boots	Xmas Biscuits (Diabetic)		£ 26.54	DEBIT CARD
Bowmansgreen Primary School	Pantomime Hall Hire		£ 112.50	300606
BT	Internet Bill		£ 105.71	DIRECT DEBIT
Cask Business Services	Book keeping assistance January		£ 192.00	300607
Chaplins Panto	Pantomime 20/01/08		£ 602.00	300609
Complete Cleaning Services	Cleaning Office & Pavilion Dec 07	£150.00		
	Cleaning Office & Pavilion Jan 08	£140.00	£ 290.00	300610
Co-op	Christmas Lights Switch-on Sweets		£ 15.98	DEBIT CARD
	Office Supplies		£ 7.64	DEBIT CARD
F & R Cawley	Trade Refuse Dec 07		£ 92.00	300608
Gibbs & Dandy	Office Maintenance		£ 48.14	300611
Green Dragon	Staff Christmas Lunch		£ 92.00	300612
Herts & Middx Wildlife trust	Membership		£ 35.00	DIRECT DEBIT
Herts County Council	Pension Payments		£ 579.05	300613
	Stationery		£ 37.00	300620
Hire One	Playing Fields Maintenance		£ 23.95	300614
Hobbco	Playing Fields Maintenance		£ 50.64	300615
Konica Minolta	Office Machine Maintenance	£ 97.50		
	Office Machine Maintenance	£ 39.82	£ 137.32	300616
Lawrence Auto	Fuel December 07		£ 105.89	300617
Lodgeway	Machine Maintenance		£ 1,452.25	300618
Midas Steel	Playing Fields Maintenance		£ 158.63	300619
Pennybright	Overall Cleaning		£ 10.00	CASH
Sainsburys	Christmas Ball expenses		£ 0.62	CASH
	Carol singing expenses		£ 19.29	CASH
Tesco	Carol singing expenses		£ 6.28	DEBIT CARD
	Mobile Phone top-up		£ 30.00	DEBIT CARD
Wickes	Machine Maintenance		£ 11.80	DEBIT CARD
	Playing Fields Maintenance		£ 13.43	DEBIT CARD
	Playing Fields Maintenance		£ 7.16	DEBIT CARD
	Office Maintenance		£ 45.82	DEBIT CARD
	Office Maintenance		£ 36.34	DEBIT CARD
Wolseley	Playing Fields Maintenance		£ 54.37	300621
	Transfer to Wages A/C		£ 7,454.66	300622
		Total	£11,898.83	
PAYMENTS MADE TO THE PARISH COUNCIL				
AT THE MEETING HELD ON THE 1 FEBRUARY 2008				
Various	Adverts in L C News		£ 155.50	
Various	Pantomime		£ 295.00	
Various	Hire of Hall		£ 240.00	
Various	Allotments Rent 2007/8		£ 27.00	
Various	Donations		£ 15.98	
		Total	£ 733.48	