

FORSBROOK PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 17TH JANUARY 2011 AT BLYTHE BRIDGE AND FORSBROOK VILLAGE HALL.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councillor Mrs. G. Burton (Chairman),
Councillor Miss S. Farr,
Councillor S. P. Fox,
Councillor A. J. Mould,
Councillor Mrs. P. Shufflebotham,
Councillor Mrs. N. A. Stanier,
Councillor Rev. B. L. Whittaker,
Councillor A. E. Wilson.

IN ATTENDANCE: County Councillor W. Day,
Mrs. C. J. Snape (Clerk),
Members of the public (2),
Press Officer.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs. S. M. Edwards, Councillor Mrs. S. A. Harrison, Councillor P. Jones and Councillor B. Yates.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Item	Member declaring interest	Nature of interest
SCC Rights of Way Issues	Councillor Mrs. P. Shufflebotham	Personal – Daughter employed by SCC in the Rights of Way Department.
Agenda item 8.7 – Letter from S. Baker, Chief Executive of SMDC.	Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton	Personal – Member of SMDC Cabinet.

Standing Orders were suspended.

3. OPEN SESSION.

3.1 Residents Issues.

3.1.1 Butchers Arms Public House.

A resident asked if Council had any update on the future of the Butchers Arms. Council responded by saying that they were aware that there had recently been an open day for prospective tenants.

3.2. County Council Report.

After wishing members A Happy New Year County Councillor W. Day gave the following report:

Pedestrian Crossing, Forsbrook – there are no current plans to provide this facility but Staffordshire County Council is undertaking a further review of the traffic situation on Cheadle Road, Forsbrook.

Uttoxeter Road/Cheadle Road/Stallington Road junction – plans are being finalised for improvements at this junction which will include the widening of the road to allow two way traffic to exit Cheadle Road.

Safer Routes to School – the pedestrian crossing planned for Cheadle Road, Blythe Bridge, near to the entrance to Forsbrook Primary School has been deferred; there are now no plans to introduce sleeping policemen in Caverswall Old Road; plans are being drawn up for a pedestrian crossing in the vicinity of Travis Perkins, Uttoxeter Road, Blythe Bridge (Council reminded County Councillor Day of the proposed housing development in this area, which could have a direct effect on the location of the pedestrian crossing); guard rails are proposed on Uttoxeter Road, Blythe Bridge. County Councillor W. Day made a note that under the Safer Routes to School proposals the Head teacher of The William Amory School has been promised that the parking bays opposite the entrance to The Co-operative Store on Uttoxeter Road would be removed as it was considered that these parking bays caused danger for both motorists and pedestrians, as it is difficult for vehicles to exit The Co-op car park and also for large delivery vehicles to enter. Vehicles parking at the bays also cause traffic build up on Uttoxeter Road. County Councillor W. Day said that he understood outstanding Safer Routes to School highway improvements would be completed before 31st March 2011.

Speed Indicator Signs (SiDS) – Staffordshire County Council will no longer be installing SiDs on a permanent basis.

Potholes – the work, scheduled to be undertaken by the Neighbourhood Highway team has been put on hold to allow them to concentrate of repairing potholes. Councillor Mould said that the problem with potholes in our area was not due to the recent two bad winters but had been caused by lack of maintenance over several years. County Councillor W. Day said that he had asked officers to consider looking at the condition of all the roads/pavements in his division.

Fencing – Lavender Avenue, Blythe Bridge – Staffordshire County Council Highway Officer David Greatbatch will be meeting representatives from the SCC Legal Department over the next few weeks to determine ownership and responsibility of the fence.

Highway Divisional Plan – a scheduled meeting with SCC Officer David Greatbatch was deferred because of lack of information in their possession with regard to highway issues raised by Forsbrook Parish Council. The clerk was again asked to send a complete list of outstanding issues to David Greatbatch.

Standing Orders were reinstated.

4. INFORMATION AND REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDING 'OUTSIDE' MEETINGS'.

There were no reports from outside meetings.

5. TO APPROVE DRAFT MINUTES OF:

Council Meeting of 21st December 2010.

Cemetery Committee Meeting of 4th January 2011.

Environment Committee Meeting of 4th January 2011.

Finance Committee Meeting of 4th January 2011.

RESOLVED:

- **To approve and sign the minutes as a correct record.**

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES.

- 6.1 Minutes dated 20th December 2010 – page 119 agenda item 3.1.2.

Councillor Mrs. P. Shufflebotham drew Council's attention to the fact that if the average width of a pavement is 52" and a double buggy is 32", should a vehicle park partly on the pavement it would be impossible to get a buggy safely past.

Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton read an extract from 'Living Streets' Policy Briefing 01/10 on Parking and the pedestrian.

"The Department for Transport have stated that:

There is currently no national legislation banning the parking of all vehicles on the pavement, due to the wide range of circumstances and locations where pavement parking occurs. For example in some narrow residential roads with a lack of off-street parking provision, drivers have little option but to park on the pavement to avoid causing traffic hazards. The Government has no plans at present to introduce new legislation specially aimed at banning pavement parking on a national scale"

She urged Councillors and residents to continue to report to the local police specific areas where motorists were causing an obstruction.

- 6.2 Minutes dated 20th December 2010 – page 126 agenda item 11.2 – parking on yellow lines in Cheadle Road, Forsbrook.

Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton said that she has reported this concern to the Enforcement Officers at Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

- 6.3 Minutes dated 4th January 2011 – page 132 agenda item 6 – dog fouling.

Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton reported that she has provided the District Council with a list of hot spot areas where dog fouling was occurring and urged Councillors and residents to continue to report incidents. She said that there were few reports logged on the District Council incidents record so they did not recognise that there was a dog-fouling problem in our area.

7. CLERK'S REPORT.

7.1 To receive and note – agenda enclosures, correspondence outgoing and emails not detailed as separate agenda items.

7.2 To note dates of 'outside' meetings as follows:

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council – District and Parish Council Elections 5th May 2011 – Pre Nomination Evening – Tuesday 18th January 2011 at 6.30pm in the Dove Room, Moorlands House, Stockwell Street, Leek.

Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton said that should there be elections the above meeting would explain the forms that will need to be completed for anyone wishing to stand as a Parish or District Councillor.

7.3 To receive the following circulation material:

- Rural Service Network Newsletter.
- Staffordshire 3rd Section Network E-Bulletin.
- Sustainable Staffordshire Newsletter.
- Clerks & Councils Direct – January 2011 Issue.

8. CORRESPONDENCE:

8.1 Staffordshire County Council – subject: Moorlands Watchdog Forum.

Minutes of meeting held on 18th October 2010 and latest watchdog scams were received and noted.

8.2 The Royal British Legion – subject: Great Poppy Party Weekend.

Background information on the Poppy Parties that The Royal British Legion is encouraging individuals and groups to hold across the nation over the weekend of 10th -12th June 2011 in celebration of The Royal British Legion's 90th birthday was noted.

8.3 Community Council of Staffordshire – subject: Best Kept Village Competition 2011.

Details of the above competition were received and noted and were available to any interested groups in the community.

8.4 Community Council of Staffordshire – subject: Staffordshire Diary of Village Festivals and Events 2011.

It was noted that the Community Council of Staffordshire is compiling a diary of village festivals and events being held in Staffordshire in 2011.

8.5 Staffordshire County Council – subject: Local Council's Event held on 4th October 2010.

It was noted that a review of the presentations given at the above meeting is available on: www.spcaonline.org.uk.

It was also noted that an internet based email system for use by all local councils is being set up.

8.6 Staffordshire Moorlands District Council – subject: Parish Precept 2011/12.

RESOLVED:

- **To complete the application form detailing the precept requirements for Forsbrook Parish Council for year 2011/12 of £46000 and to return by 24th January 2011 as requested by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.**

8.7 Staffordshire Moorlands District Council – subject: Budget Consultation.

Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton read a letter from Chief Executive Simon Baker setting out the challenges Staffordshire Moorlands District Council are faced with following the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review in October.

“Each year Staffordshire Moorlands District Council carries out public and partner consultation on its spending priorities.

Usually, it is a case of establishing which services, projects or activities our residents, partners and businesses would like us to spend more on. Clearly, the circumstances are very different this year, with the emphasis being much more on what we can no longer do, or what we are going to do less in the future.

You will be well aware that, following the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review in October, we have some major financial challenges ahead of us. Like all local authorities and public sector organisations we are facing the largest reduction in public spending for many years. In this financial climate, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council remains committed to keeping council tax rises low and to providing good value for money in its services.

We have now received notification of our funding settlement from the Government (on Monday 13th December) for the next two years. Substantial funding cuts (26% over four years based on receiving an average settlement) had been anticipated for some time but unfortunately, like many other shire districts, we are due to receive an even lower settlement than originally anticipated. We are therefore currently assessing the precise position and developing our plans to tackle what is a very substantial challenge.

Although all councils are facing these major challenges, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is better placed than most due to our strategic alliance with High Peak Borough Council. Our programme of shared services, has already delivered significant savings of £1.4 million whilst continuing to deliver high quality services to residents. We are continuing to identify and deliver further efficiencies through our work with High Peak and are on track to deliver a further £1.77 million by March 2013.

Our focus will continue to be on making efficiency savings. However, we cannot achieve the scale of savings now required solely through further efficiency savings. We have to consider which services we must provide, which we should provide and which are desirable but we can no longer afford to provide.

In developing our outline plans, we are proposing 2 clear priorities:

- **Maintaining front-line services** – *this means that we will protect those services that really matter to our residents, such as refuse collection, cleaning our streets, providing housing, tending to the parks, keeping leisure centres open and dealing with benefits claims.*

- **Maintaining low council tax rises** – this year, through our prudent financial management, we managed to set a 0% council tax rise. We expect to be able to do the same next year.

Options for spending reductions which are currently being considered are:

- Reducing management costs across the strategic alliance, whilst doing our very best to maintain performance levels;
- Reviewing our “back office”, support and discretionary services (such as: regeneration, communications, policy) which may no longer be possible to deliver to the same level currently provided or, indeed, at all;
- Exploring opportunities to share services or reduce areas of overlap with local partners, such as Parish and Town Councils, County Council, health services, the Police and the voluntary sector.
- Reviewing some of our fees and charges next year (when the effects of the economic downturn and the prospects of recovery, are understood); and
- Questioning whether we need to continue to provide services which are also provided by the private sector, such as pest control, commercial waste collection and building control.

We welcome your thoughts on these proposals, particularly on which services we should continue to provide. Please take the time to contribute to these difficult decisions which have to be made. Comments should be sent to Kerry Towers at the address overleaf or by emailing policy@staffsmoorlands.gov.uk. We would be very happy to hear from you if you have any thoughts on further efficiencies which could be made through joint working across the three tiers of local government. Comments must be received by 28th January.

Also, as individual residents, you are welcome to use our electronic consultation tool which is available on www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk”

Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton highlighted services, which she felt were important –

Street Scene

Sweeping of pavements and footways.

Collection of litter debris from highways, streets and footpaths.

Speedy removal of any fly tipping.

Speedy removal of any dog fouling together with adopting a proactive approach to reducing incidents.

Refuse Collection

Ensuring that the services for recycling and waste collection are maintained at the current level.

Enforcement

Ensuring that enforcement action is taken with regard to dropping litter, fly tipping and dog fouling.

Community Safety

Continue to provide a service to reduce and deal with anti social behaviour throughout the District. (This service has been very successful – 8 anti social behaviour orders, 33 anti social behaviour contracts, 30 Community Pride action days, siting of mosquito devices in problem areas and a booklet on how to respond to anti social behaviour, delivered to all residents).

Continue to maintain and monitor CCTV 24/7 throughout the District.

Councillors **AGREED** and the clerk was requested to respond to the consultation accordingly.

Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton also urged all Councillors and residents to respond to the consultation.

- 8.8 Spatial Technology (UK) – subject: Parish Online.

It was noted that additional services are being added to the mapping facilities and that there will be no increase in the annual subscription for 2011.

- 8.9 Came & Company – subject: Property Protection – Weight of Snow.

Fact sheet on the above was received and noted.

- 8.10 Staffordshire Parish Council’s Association – subject: Weekly Updates.

Detailed information on various issues including the Communities and Local Government major infrastructure planning reform Work Plan were received and noted. Councillors raised no issues.

- 8.11 To receive and note general correspondence and to agree action as required.

Email Exchanges:	Subject:
Staffordshire County Council	Location of grit bins/request for replacement grit bin at Brookgate.
Staffordshire County Council (Highway Defects)	Blocked drains; Potholes – various locations; Sunken utility covers; Sunken/damaged kerbstones.
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (Online service requests)	Litter/dog fouling - various areas.
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council	Links to meetings.
Staffordshire Moorlands District Council	Enforcement – 38 Dilhorne Road, Forsbrook – caravan.

9. PLANNING.

- 9.1 Planning Applications:

01123/FUL – 46 Mount Road, Blythe Bridge – rear conservatory.

01119/FUL – The Recreation Ground, The Avenue, Blythe Bridge – proposed front extension to existing changing rooms.

RESOLVED:

- **To respond to the above planning applications as follows:**
- 01123/FUL – To raise no concerns providing the scale and design are in keeping and there is no adverse effect on the privacy of adjacent neighbours.**
- **01119/FUL – To make no comments.**

- 9.2 Planning Approvals:

The following planning approval was noted:

00923/FUL – 16 Draycott Old Road, Forsbrook – single storey front extension including rear roof lights.

9.3 Planning Refusals:

There were no planning refusals to note.

9.4 Planning matters.

It was noted that Staffordshire Moorlands District Council Planning Applications Committee approved Planning application 01119/FUL for an extension to the changing rooms on Blythe Bridge recreation ground on 13th January 2011. Quotes/tenders will be obtained by the clerk to enable a funding bid to be submitted as soon as the official planning approval has been received.

10. CEMETERY:

10.1 Cemetery Report.

Councillor Mrs. P. Shufflebotham, Chairman of the Cemetery Committee said she had no matters to bring to the attention of Council.

10.2 Cemetery Committee Meeting of 4th January 2011 – pages 129 and 130.

RESOLVED:

➤ **To approve all the recommendations of the Cemetery Committee.**

10.3 Cemetery Issues.

No cemetery issues were raised.

11. ENVIRONMENT:

11.1 Environment Report.

Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton (Chairman of the Environment Committee) reported that Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is presently consulting on introducing Dog Control Orders in certain areas. She said she would monitor progress and ascertain if similar Dog Control Orders can be introduced for Forsbrook Parish.

11.2 Environment Committee Meeting of 4th January 2011 – pages 131 and 132.

RESOLVED:

➤ **To approve all the recommendations of the Environment Committee.**

11.3 Environment Issues.

Issue	Action
Drain Cleaning – several areas are flooding because of blocked drains.	The clerk reported that she has asked for all drains in the area to be inspected and cleaned but has not had any response to-date.

12. FINANCE:

12.1 Bank Balance

It was noted that the bank balance as at 31st December 2010.

Community Direct Account	35600.23
14 Day Account	57753.31
Outstanding debits	(1264.41)
Outstanding credits	125.00
Total	92214.13

12.2 January 2011 accounts.

The following accounts were submitted for payment:

Cheque No.	Supplier	Net	VAT	Gross
402037	Town and Country Services	310.00	62.00	372.00
402038	SMDC	192.00	33.60	225.60
402039	J. G. Fenn	63.45	11.10	74.55
402040	Christine J. Snape	878.95		878.95
402041	C. J. Brian	327.00		327.00
DD	Eon	40.00		40.00
Total		1811.40	106.70	1918.10

RESOLVED:

- **To approve payment of January 2011 accounts.**

12.3 Finance Committee Meeting of 4th January 2011 – pages 133 and 134.

RESOLVED:

- **To approve all the recommendations of the Finance Committee.**

13. PARISH PLAN

Chairman Councillor Mrs. G. Burton advised that Staffordshire County Council, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, Staffordshire Police Cheadle Division and all residents have now received a copy of the Parish Plan and copies were also available to view at Blythe Bridge Library and The Hair Studio in Forsbrook. There is also a link to all the Parish Plan documents on the Council's web site. She thanked the clerk for all her hard work.

RESOLVED:

- **To formally adopt the Parish Plan.**

The meeting concluded at 8.20pm.

Clerk to the Council

Chairman.