

**Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on Thursday, 8th May 2008,
at 7.30 pm, in the Old School Room, Charlton**

PRESENT Cllr B B Browne (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs D M Barlow
Cllr S M Eggleston
Cllr E G Grazier
Cllr Mrs B W Jack
Cllr Mrs F Wilkinson
Cllr M P Wood

In attendance: County Cllr Mrs Liz Eyre
District Cllr Tom McDonald
Clive Bostle, Parish Paths Warden
Roger Gurney, Clerk to the Parish Council

ADJOURNMENT FOR PUBLIC FORUM

(6 members of the public were present and all questions raised matters regarding the flooding on 20th July 2007, the Flood meeting held on 7th February 2008 and the progress of the work currently being undertaken. There was general satisfaction that, at last, the Environment Agency has commenced flood prevention work, but the view was expressed that the footbridge on the Green was the major cause of flooding and it ought to be removed. The EA's work has involved making a channel around the bridge and part of the slope of the bridge has been replaced with steps, which could be dangerous, as there is no handrail. There is an open Flood meeting in Charlton in 2 weeks time. Clive Bostle commented that the footbridge is probably a public footpath; this needs to be checked).

38/08 COUNCILLOR MRS B W JACK

The Chairman, Cllr Brian Browne, informed the Meeting that Cllr Mrs Jack was elected to Charlton Parish Council in May 1958 and, to mark this continuous 50 year achievement, she was presented with an engraved silver tray and a bouquet of flowers from members of the Parish Council. Parish Councillors, together with County Cllr Mrs Eyre, District Cllr McDonald and the Clerk, went outside for a photograph to be taken to mark the occasion.

39/08 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Browne was proposed by Cllr Eggleston, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jack, and agreed.

40/08 CHAIRMAN'S DECLARATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Browne completed and signed the Declaration and Acceptance of Office.

41/08 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

42/08 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Grazier was proposed by Cllr Browne, seconded by Cllr Mrs Wilkinson, and agreed.

43/08 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

44/08 APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES/WORKING GROUPS

- (1) **Planning Committee** – Cllrs Mrs Barlow, Eggleston, Grazier, Mrs Jack, Mrs Wilkinson and Wood
- (2) **Cemetery WG** – Cllrs Eggleston, Mrs Jack and Wood
- (3) **Finance WG** – Cllrs Browne, Eggleston and Grazier
- (4) **Urgent Matters WG** – Cllrs Browne, Eggleston, Grazier and Wood

45/08 APPOINTMENT OF PARISH REPRESENTATIVES

- (1) **Crophorne and Charlton Village Hall Committee** – Cllr Mrs Wilkinson
- (2) **Workman Trust** – Cllr Mrs Barlow
- (3) **Worcestershire CALC** – Cllr Browne

46/08 ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

- (1) **Street lighting** – Cllr Mrs Jack/Clerk
- (2) **Mowing** – Cllr Mrs Jack
- (3) **Footpaths** – Clive Bostle
- (4) **Tree warden** – Cllr Grazier

47/08 PARISH COUNCIL INSURANCE

The Clerk reported that the annual premium for the same cover has increased from £416.94 to £436.21. It was resolved that this be accepted.

48/08 MEETING DATES FOR 2008/2009

A list of suggested dates based on the existing 2 month cycle was circulated with the agenda. It was agreed that the Parish Meeting be held on Thursday, 16th April 2009 and, with that exception, it was agreed that meetings continue to be held on the second Thursday of alternate months, commencing in July 2008.

49/08 FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- (1) **Cheque signatories.** It was confirmed that Cllrs Browne, Eggleston, Grazier and Mrs Jack continue as cheque signatories.
- (2) **Internal Auditor.** It was confirmed that Charles Tooby continues as the Internal Auditor.

50/08 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th MARCH 2008

The draft Minutes had been circulated previously. It was RESOLVED that these be signed as a true record.

51/08 PROGRESS REPORTS FOR INFORMATION

1. Footpath Warden. Clive Bostle was invited to speak. He reported that the preparation of a footpath map of the Parish by WCC is planned for this year, but we will have to wait! He is planning to arrange walks around the Parish during the summer. He was concerned to note that the EA had not sought a temporary closing order on the public footpath when working on Merry Brook below The Green. There have been some obstructions to some footpaths across fields off Haselor Lane.

2. Lengthsman. Steve Gwilliam was not in attendance. The Clerk reported that WCC has increased the annual grant to £2,060 and that he has returned the annual agreement to WCC.

3. New seats in the Cemetery. Cllr Mrs Jack reported that the seat kindly donated by Mr and Mrs Gisborne is now in place and is a welcome addition to the Cemetery. She is discussing the details of the siting of the seat donated in memory of Mrs Habbitts with her daughter and it was agreed that the PC would help with the provision of paving slabs, if necessary.

4. Litter picking bursary. Details of the litter pick are not known, but Mrs Owen will be making the necessary arrangements with WDC.

5. Unauthorised development, Haselor Lane. The Clerk updated the Council by stating that WDC Planners are now asking for a planning application for the works which have been undertaken on this land and that WDC Engineers are prepared to take action for the blocked roadside culvert.

6. Letters of thanks. The Clerk reported that letters of thanks for PC support have been received from Wychavon CAB and the Workman Trust. It was agreed that the PC is now able to pay the grant promised to the Workman Trust.

52/08 COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORTS

County Cllr Mrs Liz Eyre was invited to speak. She reported that the Children's and Young Persons Plan is progressing well and WCC is assessing Deprivation and Rural Poverty. The impact of the proposed "Eco Town" at Long Marston airfield, which is partly in Worcestershire, is being investigated. £15K is planned to be spent on urban roads, which includes villages, and work is planned for Charlton – originally by the end of June 2008, but this appears to have slipped again. With the concern about the lack of highway maintenance in Charlton County Cllr Mrs Eyre will arrange for Paul Cooper, who is responsible for this area to attend the next PC meeting. She requested a copy of a map showing the problem gullies in the village and of the stretch of proposed footway between The Dovecote and the church.

District Cllr Tom McDonald had sent a report, which referred to the Council Tax levels for 2008/9; the introduction of wheelie bins in the Parish by February 2009; the Flood Action Plan, which should be available later this summer; more money will be available via Red Cross grants; the Local Strategic Partnership for Evesham will now have an input into Parish Plans; finance is available from WDC for the purchase of playgrounds and for Play Groups.

53/08 FINANCE

1. Receipts and Payments Account: 03.03.08 - 03.04.08

This was circulated with the agenda and was accepted.

2. Accounts for Payment

It was proposed by Cllr Mrs Jack, seconded by Cllr Eggleston and agreed that the following accounts be paid:

R D Gurney, salary, 01.04.08 - 31.05.08	£485.56
Staples UK Ltd - photocopying, stationery, stamps	
£68.64 + £11.26 VAT (5 invoices)	£ 79.90
Worcestershire CALC – subscription, £190.47 + £29.22 VAT	£219.69
additional Mails	£ 15.00
Allianz Insurance plc	£436.21

Limebridge Rural Services Ltd – mowing and Cemetery hedge	
March, £1,004.00 + £175.71 VAT	£1,179.71
April, £439.00 + £76.83 VAT	£515.83
N Power, Jan-March	£121.43 + £6.07 VAT
Steve Gwilliam lengthsman duties (April)	£127.50
Joseph Baker Workman Trust	£160.00
Joseph Baker Workman Trust	£250.00
<u>Confirmation of payments made, 10.04.08</u>	
Steve Gwilliam lengthsman duties (March)	£160.00
Wychavon DC, Cemetery rates	£ 34.45

The Clerk was asked, first, to contact N Power to ascertain why their charge has increased by the large amount indicated in their letter and what is the justification for the administration charge? The Clerk was also asked to find out if Limebridge Rural Services had made any adjustment with the charge for mowing The Green, bearing in mind that the Environment Agency has been working there since 7th April.

54/08 ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2008

Copies of the Accounts were circulated with the agenda and these were explained by the Clerk. That the Accounts be approved was proposed by Cllr Wood, seconded by Cllr Mrs Jack, and agreed. A copy of the Accounts was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk/RFO.

55/08 EXTERNAL AUDIT AND COMPLETION OF THE ANNUAL RETURN

The Clerk reported that the Annual Return has to be submitted to the External Auditor by 30th June 2008, and the timetable for the period of inspection is currently being advertised on the Parish Council notice board. This year Charlton PC is not required to undertake a fuller audit. It was resolved that a meeting of the Finance Working Group is held, with the authority for the Working Group to complete the Annual Return.

56/08 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

A copy of the draft minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 10th April 2008 was circulated with the agenda. The Clerk has already reported the highway problems to WCC and these have been discussed with County Cllr Mrs Eyre. Matters relating to flood alleviation have been raised in the Public Forum and will be discussed later in this meeting.

57/08 FLOOD PREVENTION UPDATE AND PROGRESS

The Chairman reported that there has recently been a plethora of emails from Dave Norman (EA), the Charlton Flood Committee, Steve Jorden (WDC) and others. The EA has completed the work on Merry Brook across The Green, although the replacement of the sloping access with the unsightly steps is not considered to be ideal. It seems that Phase 2 will not commence until the autumn. The general feeling was that the work done by the EA will not make a great deal of difference to water flow; the speed of the flow seems to have increased, but the level appears to be the same, although there has been some straightening. Further remedial work downstream in Phase 2 should help. A report from Dave Norman is due in the summer.

The Chairman referred to a letter from the insurance broker to a resident, indicating that flood cover is to be withdrawn unless some assurances can be given that action is being

taken to prevent likely flooding. The Clerk and Chairman will prepare a response from the PC and has obtained relevant contacts at the EA, WDC and the Flood Committee.

58/08 FOOTBRIDGE ON THE GREEN

With a report from the EA due in the summer members were aware that the future of the footbridge could be in question. As it is believed to be a public footpath the PC would have to look to its replacement, not just its removal. Although the EA has not so far stated in writing that the footbridge should be replaced members felt that possible designs and cost for a new footbridge should be sought, from the EA and WCC Countryside Section. After some discussion it was proposed by Cllr Eggleston and seconded by Cllr Mrs Barlow that “the footbridge on The Green should be removed and replaced”; this was unanimously agreed.

59/08 HIGHWAY MATTERS

These have already been discussed earlier in the meeting.

60/08 PROMOTING THE PARISH COUNCIL

It was agreed that some report of this meeting be given for publication in Five Alive and the Clerk will liaise with Cllr Mrs Barlow.

61/08 CHARLTON PARISH PLAN COMMITTEE

Following discussions at recent meetings of the Parish Council and at the Annual Parish Meeting it was agreed that this Committee be reconvened. Elaine Hawley has agreed to continue, together with Cllrs Browne and Eggleston.

62/08 PLANNING COMMITTEE

The reports of the Planning Committee meetings held on 13th March 2008 and 24th April 2008, which were enclosed with the agenda, were noted.

63/08 CALC MATTERS

The Chairman reported that changes to the qualifying criteria for QPS are due to be relaxed. The Clerk reported that, at a recent meeting of Clerks, parish councils will have to consider “powers of well being” and they should be aware when considering their next budgets that there is possibly a move that parish councils could be capped.

64/08 CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION

The following correspondence was noted:

1. Charlton Fayre – permission to use The Green, 21st June 2008 - AGREED
2. WDC Proposed Dog Control Order – consultation
3. WCC launch of the Children and Young People’s Plan, 2008-2011
4. WCC Waste Core Strategy – notice of withdrawal of preferred Options
5. N power – notification of 21% increase for street lighting
6. Wicksteed Playscapes brochure
7. Wychavon’s Community Strategy 2007-2010 summary (enclosed)
8. Magazines, including Local Council Review, Community First Newline, Speaking Out (WMRA), Worcestershire Partnership

65/08 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/INCLUSION ON NEXT AGENDA

The Public Forum should be at the start of the Meeting.

66/08 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Thursday, 10th July 2008.

10th July 2008