

SOUTHILL PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A GENERAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON TUESDAY 16th MAY 2006 @ 7.00PM AT BROOM VILLAGE HALL

Present: Cllrs. Egar (Chairman), Emanuel, Fielder, Green, Hall, Hubbard, Jones, Ralph, and Rook, District Councillors Baines and Gillett, the Parish Clerk and thirty seven members of the public.

At the outset of the meeting the Chairman welcomed Cllr. Ralph to her first meeting as a Councillor.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs. Capon and Stuckey.

2. Councillor G. Richardson

The Chairman informed the meeting of the sad death of Cllr. Richardson and went on to pay tribute to his long and outstanding service not only to the Council but also to the community as a whole. On behalf of the Council he offered his condolences to Cllr. Richardson's family. He would be sadly missed. Following these comments the meeting observed a minute's silence.

3. Election of Chairman

Cllr. Hall proposed and Cllr. Rook seconded Cllr. Egar. There being no other nominations, Cllr. Egar was unanimously elected as Chairman.

4. Election of Vice Chairman

Cllr. Green proposed and Cllr. Fielder seconded Cllr. Emanuel. There being no other nominations, Cllr. Emanuel was unanimously elected as Vice Chairman.

5. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th March 2006 were confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

6. Matters arising from the Minutes

a) Bus Shelter - Broom

It was noted that a seat, provided by Tarmac Ltd., was now in position in the shelter.

7. Police Report

PC Saward reported that there had been a number of burglaries and thefts from motor vehicles close to this area and he advised extra vigilance.

8. Councillor Vacancy

Due to the sad death of Cllr. Richardson, there was now a vacancy in the Broom ward. The Clerk outlined the normal procedures to be followed in the event of a vacancy and the Council agreed these would be followed.

9. Parish Partnership Scheme

a) Stanford Road Junction Improvements

There had still been no action from the County Council in completing the outstanding work despite continued requests.

b) 2005/2006 Scheme

Although installation of the vehicle activated speed sign had been expected in early April, it was still awaited. County Councillor Scott informed the meeting that unfortunately there had

been a delay in the supply of the signs and they were now expected in June.

c) 2006/2007 Scheme

Details of the scheme for 2006/07 were outlined to the Council with a sum of £4,000 available to be spent. Following discussion, it was decided that another speed sign would be the most appropriate option. The estimated cost of the sign was £6,000, but it was thought possible that £1,000 could be available from the Community Liaison Forum. Any additional funding needed could be found from Council balances. The Highways Special Interest Group (Cllr. Ralph agreed to be the Southill representative) would consider the most appropriate venue for the new sign.

10. Special Interest Groups' Reports

a) School

Cllr. Rook reported that there were currently 67 children attending the school (61 full time and 6 part time). A 'quiet area' in the garden will be provided shortly.

b) Broom Quarry Liaison

Cllr. Green reported that there had not been a meeting of the Group since the last Parish Council meeting, the next meeting being scheduled for 7th June. In the light of criticism from some members of the community regarding insufficient liaison with them about the extension to the east of Broom, Cllr. Green stated that a detailed article was published in Outlook in November 2003 summarising Tarmac's proposals to apply for planning consent to extend the life of the quarry, there were notices in the local newspaper, there were signs erected on the site, the matter was raised at a number of Council meetings, extensive representations were made by the Special Interest Group to the County Council, and members of the Council discussed the issue with a number of parishioners and found from them that there was little or no interest in the proposals. He went on to add that representations were made to the County Council for community gain but this had received little support from County Council members.

c) Grass Cutting

Cllr. Green reported that a cut had been made 2/3 weeks ago, but that preferences were for a shorter cut. Broom Green had not yet been cut.

d) Play Areas – Southill

The new trees to be planted on the green would now wait until the autumn.

Play Areas – Broom

Little progress had been made since the last meeting. District Councillor Gillett was continuing consultation with Shuttleworth. Section 107 monies were available from the District Council, but would need to be used within a five year time span.

Play Areas - Stanford

A request for grant aid of £500 towards the cost of three picnic tables had been received from the Stanford Playing Field Association. Following discussion this was approved. With regard to assistance with the associations VAT payments, it was decided to wait until the results of the current inquiry into the Council's VAT claim had been resolved.

e) Community Liaison Forum

At its last meeting the Forum had received a presentation from Amey, the new highways contractor for the County Council. It was stated that the priority for the coming years would be the unclassified roads in the County which were in need of serious attention.

11. Broom Quarry – Potential Expansion

At this point both Cllrs. Egar and Rook declared an interest in the item to be discussed and left the room. The Vice Chairman assumed the Chair. Cllr. Green set the scene, informing Councillors that Beds CC are required to provide a mineral extraction site and that a short list is now being drawn up after which detailed applications will be awaited. On the assumption that the site to the south of Broom is a possibility, the Council have to decide as to their stance on the issue. The choice was one of total opposition or acceptance with substantial community gain and following much discussion it was decided that a special meeting of the Council be called within 4/5 weeks to make a final decision. This would enable Councillors time to speak to residents with a view to gauging the views of the whole community.

12. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations

It was apparent that there were no standing orders or financial regulations in place for the Council and the Chairman advised that although this was not a legal requirement, it was good practice to have them. After a brief discussion it was agreed that a suitable modal be adopted and a special group consisting of the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr. Fielder was set up to produce a document for Council approval at a future meeting.

13. Broom Charity Fun Day

The Council received a request for permission to use Broom Village Green for the above event on 2nd September 2006. Permission was granted.

14. Highway Maintenance

There were no issues raised other than the laurel hedge at 22 High Street, Broom which despite many requests to the County Council had still not been repositioned. Cllr. Green agreed to monitor the situation and continue to urge the County Council for action.

15. Planning

a) Applications considered

The Green Man, Broom Road, Stanford

Reposition of existing kitchen extractor fan ducts

No objections

The Green Man, Broom Road, Stanford

Retention of 2 masts supporting security cameras

No objections

Gracious Farm, High Street, Southill

New access and access road

No objections

b) Decisions – Approvals

21 Southill Road, Broom

Retention of first floor rear extension and alteration to chimney

Holme Regis, Old School Lane, Stanford

Conservatory to rear

Little Dene Farm, Southill Road, Broom

3 bay portals framed extension to existing onion storage building

c) Decisions – Refusals

Land adjacent to 2 The Woodlands, Broom

Detached two bed chalet bungalow

16. Financial Matters

a) Bank Balances

The Clerk reported bank balances as follows :

	£
Community Account	10,838.44
Business Premium Account	14,330.62

b) Payments

The following accounts have been received and were approved for payment :

		£
Broom Village Hall	Hire of room	30.00
A. R. Worboys	Grass cutting	405.44
P.D. Knightley	Clerk's duties & expenses April 2006	1079.55
Allianz Cornhill	Insurance premium 2006/07	1050.14

c) VAT Refund 2005/2006

It was noted that there had been a delay in the VAT refund for the last financial year as Customs and Excise were currently investigating a variance in the amount claimed compared to the previous year. The Clerk was currently providing information to Customs to hopefully rectify the situation.

d) Request for a financial grant

The Chairman outlined a request from Broom Village Hall for assistance towards the cost of resurfacing the main hall floor. After discussion the Council awarded a grant of £250.

17. Correspondence

The Clerk reported on the correspondence. :

a) Bedfordshire County Council

Grass cutting 2006/2007

b) Mid Beds District Council

Local Development Framework : Statement of Community Involvement

Play & Open Space Grant Fund

Grant Aid for Voluntary Groups and Not For Profit Organisations

Forward Plan

Community Safety Conference – 24th May 2006

Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005

c) Bedfordshire RCC

Bedfordshire Bugle – March and May 2006

Village of the Year Competition

d) Bedfordshire Playing Fields Assoc.

Newsletter (including Ashley Watkins Trophy)

There being no further business the meeting ended at 9.05pm.

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Monday 10^h July 2006 commencing at 7.00pm at Southill Lower School

At a general meeting before the Parish Council Meeting the following points were raised by the public : -

- Concern was expressed over the perceived lack of communication with residents regarding the eastern extension to Broom Quarry
- A member of the public outlined ways in which objections to any future quarry sites can be made
- Will the Council object to or support the anticipated planning application for an extension southwards to Broom Quarry.
- There was lack of knowledge amongst residents regarding the identity of Councillors and how they are elected
- There was concern over inadequate advertising of the Council meetings, particularly in Stanford.
- The minutes of Council meetings should be more readily available to residents.